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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM • LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO • PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 47 no.15 | July 15, 2015 | suggested donation $0.50

CAPITALISM KILLS IN CHARLESTON



A cockroach named Dylann Roof pulled the trigger at Emanuel AME Church. But capitalism aimed the gun. Capitalism murdered nine people in Charleston, South Carolina on June 17—nine more victims to add to the millions of workers killed each year by callous starvation, preventable disease, environmental toxins, a profit-crazed pharmaceutical industry, missing medical care, mad-dog police, and imperialist war.

And, in particular, by racism.

The foundation of U.S. capital consists of two centuries of Black enslavement and another century and a half of super-exploitation of Black and Latin and immigrant workers. To justify these super-profits of hundreds of billions of dollars a year, and protect their organized crime, the capitalist bosses rely on racist ideology. This ranges from the pseudo-science of "intelligence" testing—and the bogus concept of "race" itself—to Barack Obama calling the Baltimore rebels "thugs," the contemporary n-word. To beat back revolt against their oppressive profit system, the rulers resort to state terror: the mass incarceration and legalized lynching of young Black men and women by the bosses' cops. (See CHALLENGE, page 4.)

Following Racist Leaders

Dylann Roof was both a product and an instrument of this racist, ruling-class agenda. In his online manifesto, Roof said he was "radicalized" by the 2012 murder of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, a wannabe cop.

He was influenced by the white-supremacist Council of Conservative Citizens, an offshoot of the White Citizens' Councils of the 1950s and '60s that harassed and assaulted civil rights workers in the South. (Essentially an open version of the Ku Klux Klan, the Citizens Councils' membership included Congressmen, state legislators, newspaper publishers and editors, and the mayor of Jackson, Mississippi.)

Given Roof's gutter leanings, he was no doubt inspired by the recent onslaught of murders-by-cop, the cold-blooded killings of Freddie Gray and Michael Brown and Eric Garner and Shantel Davis and too many others to mention. When the bosses' police and courts declare open season on Black workers and youth, vigilante scum follow their lead.

Sometimes these atrocities are useful to the ruling class. By distorting the events through their corporate media, the capitalists use them to intimidate workers and feed racist stereotypes. They can try to turn us against one another. They know the one force that can destroy them is a unified, multiracial working class with revolutionary communist leadership. Without racism to divide the world's workers, there aren't enough bombs in the world to keep the bosses afloat—or alive.

Terrorists, Big and Small

But sometimes the little terrorists go too far. Sometimes they threaten the rulers' overriding strategy to recruit enough reliable soldiers for the next big war over Middle Eastern oil, against Russia or China or both. Then the big terrorists slap the little ones down, in a desperate attempt to retain workers' allegiance and hold open rebellion at bay.

That's what happened in Ferguson, when the U.S. Attorney General rushed to the scene and launched a civil rights investigation. It happened in Baltimore, when the injustice system was compelled to indict six cops after the brutal in-custody execution of Freddie Gray. It just happened again in Charleston, when politicians of both parties and all stripes joined the liberal national media in condemning Roof and declaring that the Confederate battle flag must go.

In a time of intense partisanship and ruling-class dysfunction, the dominant finance capital wing has used the Charleston massacre to unite and discipline its ranks. News of campaign donations from the Council of Conservative Citizens discredited three Republicans presidential candidates: Ted Cruz, Rand Paul, and Rick Santorum. All are close allies of Charles and David Koch, the Kansas billionaires with huge investments in the domestic U.S. oil industry—and little interest in going to a war to defend ExxonMobil's profits in Iraq or Saudi Arabia. The three candidates were exposed because the biggest U.S. bosses—rep-

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OUR FIGHT

✵Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✵Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✵Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✵While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✵Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✵Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✵Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✵Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✵Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✵Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue $0.50. One Year: $15. Six months: $10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, July 15, 2015. Volume 47, No. 14

Editorial

CAPITALISM KILLS IN CHARLESTON



Confederate flag burning in Florida following racist vigilante murders at a Charleston church



U.S. flag burning in Ferguson following racist police murder of Mike Brown

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resented by Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Jeb Bush, among others—don't trust their leadership in the next global conflict.

Workers Have But One Flag

The Confederate flag is an abomination. It stands for slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and the most brutal, unspeakable oppression of men, women, and children. It should be shredded and burned wherever it is found. But the Confederacy had nothing to do with the genocidal slaughter of millions of people in the Vietnam War, or the half a million children killed by U.S. sanctions against Iraq, or the hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians incinerated by atomic bombs in World War II. These genocidal crimes were committed by the side that won the Civil War, by finance capital, under the most feared and despicable banner in the world today: the U.S. flag.

Workers have no nation. National flags can lead them only in the wrong direction. Flags fuel conflict among workers wherever capitalists are at odds: in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, in Israel and Palestine. The international working class has only one flag—the red flag of communist revolution. The Progressive Labor Party has carried that flag for fifty years in our fight against racist terror and for a society run by workers to meet workers' needs. We hold the red flag high in two dozen countries. Join us!✪



Workers protest anti-Black racism. The racist bosses in the Dominican Republic are gearing up 2,000 troops to deport 250,000 undocumented workers of Haitian descent. This is an ethnic cleansing similar to the Parsley Massacre under the U.S.-backed fascist Rafael Trujillo in 1937. More than 17,000 have already been deported, who are met with another set of deadly conditions set up by the Haitian bosses. Dominican and Haitian workers must unite against racist deportations and the ruling class's terror. We have no stake in these artificial borders (more next issue).

Multiracial Unity on Juneteenth

WASHINGTON, DC, June 19 — Today is Juneteenth, a holiday that commemorates the abolition of slavery throughout the South. On June 19, 1865, hundreds of thousands of slaves in Texas were the last ones to be emanicipated, more than two and half years after slavery was legally abolished. One hundred and fifty years later, workers are still fighting against racist oppression.

In a somber gathering, hundreds used Juneteenth to honor the nine victims of the racist shootings at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

The murderer, Dylann Roof, is a racist militant determined to provoke a race war in the United States. While racist Roof is charged with murder, this racist system is stays free to kill and terrorize Black youth! The working class will propel itself forward in the struggle against this racist capitalist system, just like Denmark Vesey attempted to do in 1822 by launching a rebellion against slavery in 1822, organized in this very same church!

Best Response to Racism? Fight Back!

Several members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party called for multiracial unity against racism and distributed CHALLENGE and leaflets. The leaflet listed several ongoing anti-racist struggles where local PL'ers are engaged. We fight against increased repression and the racist background checks policy at Metro, the bus and rail system for the DC area. The background checks have led to the unjust firing of several workers in recent months. They also block anyone with any criminal record from ever getting a job at Metro. We also work and fight for better public health. We lead struggles against HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C—diseases that have become epidemics especially among Black workers due to systemic racism.

Recently, PLP sparked courageous walkouts around the racist Freddie Gray murder in Baltimore. And we continue the decades-long struggle in Prince George's County against racist police terror.

Through conversations and our literature, PL'ers called on participants to join these ongoing struggles as the best response to the racist murders in Charleston.

Several people discussed PLP's broader vision for communism. One person made a financial contribution after a discussion about Karl Marx and how we would abolish the wage system with a communist revolution. A public works employee enthusiastically provided his contact information after learning of the PLP's work in the industrial working class.

Multiracial Unity Leads to Victory

About half of the participants at the rally were Black. This strong multiracial presence at this event is a warning sign for capitalists. But there is much work to be done to solidify such unity.

One speaker demanded to know how Al Sharpton could call for "calm" after these racist murders. He shouted, "They are telling *us* to be calm?!"

He noted that Ida B. Wells, the anti-lynching crusader, had called on Black workers to arm themselves against racists rather than calmly submit. Another speaker cited the Deacons for Defense, an armed Black group in the 1960s that defended civil rights marchers and the Black community from racist attacks in the 1960s in the South. Non-violence, he said, was not always the best strategy to beat racism!

On the other hand, a speaker from the Nation of Islam mocked the white workers at the rally. Other speakers stressed the need to build Black institutions instead of multiracial and militant fighting organizations, undermining the rally's unity. However, a Black veteran from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) of the 1960s called for multiracial unity with special outreach to poor white workers who, she declared, were exploited by the system and often had their heads filled by the racist scapegoating myths about Black people. She's right. Separatist Black institutions will inevitably end up in the bosses' camp because they build Black capitalists and capitalist ideology.

The rally ended with the release of nine balloons representing the victims in Charleston, and with the bold marching order, "Don't mourn, Organize!"✪

Mexico: Teachers Confront Bosses' Fascism

MEXICO, June 29 — The teachers' struggle here is intensifying as they have been forced to confront fascist terror from the capitalist class. In the fight against educational reforms, teachers are exposing capitalist democracy for what it is: a criminal apparatus to control the working class.



Worker-Student Unity

In spite of the huge advantages enjoyed by the repressive forces of the capitalist state, teachers, students and rural workers responded with bravery and dignity. In defiance of the bosses' government, they burned the headquarters of the four dominant parties in Mexico. They also took over the headquarters of the electoral district to attempt to to block the elections.

On June 7, the day of the federal elections, in spite of a military state of siege, teachers in struggle organized a huge demonstration and burned thousands of electoral ballots. One hundred forty-two people were arrested and sent to high security prisons in Nayarit, Veracruz and Mexico State. Most have been released, but 17 members of a solidarity organization are still incarcerated, accused of electoral crimes, terrorism, sedition, and carrying Molotov cock-tails.

The education reform introduced teacher evaluation tests. The tests are a way to terrorize and control education workers, who, according to the World Bank, are 54 percent women. They also disregard Mexico's rural, indigenous, and Black students. Teachers in Oaxaca, Guerrero, Chiapas, Michoacán and Veracruz are the strongest contingents of the National Coordinating Committee of Educational Workers (CNTE). On June 1, these groups began local strikes to promote a national political strike that had the following goals: the repeal of the criminal structural reforms, the overthrow of President Enrique Peña Nieto, and the establishment of a popular government. This plan failed.

CNTE limited itself to fighting for its own demands: the repeal of the Education Reform; keeping public education free; job security; revocation of punitive evaluations; saving previous labor gains; acceptance of its educational proposal and freedom for political prisoners. To achieve these goals, they carried out a number of highly bold actions, including the boycott of deputies and governors elections, and blockades of gas stations, airports and international stores.

As of today, Section 22 of the CNTE in Oaxaca agreed to resume negotiating demands with the Interior Minister. But, education workers need a communist revolution, not a popular government or negotiations with the capitalists.

The State Terrorizes Workers

The bosses' government led by Nieto in an effort to save the most expensive elections in history and the profits of his capitalist lords, sent his fascist apparatus to attack the teachers and weaken the struggle. Thousands of federal and local cops, soldiers and marines equipped with riot gear, high-caliber weapons, planes, helicopters and tanks, invaded Guerrero, Michoacán, Oaxaca and Chiapas. Oaxaca alone was occupied by 20,000 troops.

Fascism is the outgrowth of global capitalism. It is the intensification of the repressive and ideological forces in order to keep the existing capitalist class in power. As R. Palme Dutt wrote in *Fascism and Social Revolution*, "The causes of fascism lie deep-rooted in existing society. Capitalism in its decay breeds fascism" These fascistic conditions are what we are witnessing in Mexico.

In the face of the capitalist government's terror against the working class, and to respond to the parents' and communitysupport, the CNTE agreed on a tactical retreat to allow the completion of the school cycle. In spite of the bosses' attacks through the media and in the streets and workplaces, the struggle will continue. During the summer vacation in July and August, there will be massive demonstrations in the Federal District.

The Progressive Labor Party and CHALLENGE have played active roles in this trade union movement. We distributed thousands of flyers to infuse struggle with our communist analysis of how capitalist politics hurt the working class. PLP in Mexico presents a revolutionary strategy to destroy capitalism and to establish communism as the only solution to the problems faced by the working class. We will continue use this opportunity to strengthen the Party and advance towards a communist revolution.✪

Capitalist Politics of Lynching

The current siege of U.S. police violence against Black and Latin workers and youth sends a dual message. On the one hand, these well-publicized atrocities expose the racist nature of the cops and courts. Many people are led to question whether justice is possible under capitalism, a good starting point to win them to communist ideas.

On the other hand, nonstop murders by criminal cops also speed the rise of fascism. Videotapes of police assaults against Eric Garner (choked to death in Staten Island) or Walter Scott (shot in the back in South Carolina) or Tamir Rice (executed for holding a toy gun in Cleveland) are replayed on television, over and over. In virtually every case, the killer cops are either not indicted or found innocent by the capitalist injustice system. In another legalized lynching in Cleveland, 13 cops fired a total of 137 bullets as they gave chase to an unarmed Black man and woman. Only one cop was indicted; he'd fired 49 times, including 15 shots through the windshield while standing on the hood of the victims' car after the car was stopped. He was acquitted when the judge declared there was no way to tell whose bullets were the fatal ones.

Repeated exposure to videos of police murders, coupled with no consequences for the perpetrators, sends a clear fascist message: Keep quiet, do as you're told, and don't fight back—or you can be murdered, too.

There is also an emphatic sexist aspect to racist terror. Under slavery and for decades thereafter, Black women were commonly assaulted, raped, and tortured by slave-owners, vigilantes, and law enforcement officials. Many women number among the cops' murder victims; New Yorkers are familiar with the names of Eleanor Bumpurs, Shantel Davis, and Kyam Livingston. On May 16, 2010, in Detroit, seven-year-old Aiyana Stanley-Jones was shot in the head by kkkop Joseph Weekley as she slept in a no-knock SWAT raid on the wrong home.

In January 2015, after the judge threw out the sole felony charge and two misdemeanor trials ended in hung juries, Aiana's killer went free.

Hangings and Private Property

In class society, public displays of terror have been the rulers' stock-in-trade since antiquity. In his book *The London Hanged*, Peter Linebaugh tells of how the poor were criminalized to enable the rising British capitalist class to impose a new concept of private property. There is a clear parallel between the treatment of impoverished white people in 18th-century England and the mass incarceration and brutalization of Black and Latin males in the U.S. today. For capitalists, spectacle murder is a time-tested tool of social control and discipline of the working class. It is designed to frighten other workers into submission and stop rebellions before they start.

Beginning in 1619, when the first Africans were brought in chains to Jamestown, Virginia, Black slaves in North America were beaten into submission. Public hangings were common. A large number were murdered outright; others were worked to death.



Racist klan member gets a beating at a KKK rally

Many of these slaves had been warriors in their home villages, trained to fight back. The plantation owners did all they could to suppress Black leadership for rebellion. They broke up Black families and separated slaves who spoke the same African languages. They also segregated slaves from white indentured servants. The rulers knew that multiracial unity could bring their whole system crashing down; their strategy was to divide and conquer.

After the Civil War, freed slaves and poor white people took over the abandoned plantations and began to rebuild. In response, former slave owners and other white businessmen organized the Ku Klux Klan to reignite racism. Successful Black farmers were targeted and their property stolen. Trumped-up charges of rape and other offenses were used to arrest Black men and youths and throw them in jail, where lynch mobs often grabbed them before their day in kangaroo court. The white ruling class also imposed Jim Crow, a system of legal segregation of public schools and housing, buses and bathrooms, movie theaters and restaurants, swimming pools and water fountains. Jim Crow persisted well into the 1960s, when the Civil Rights movement and a wave of urban rebellions forced the federal government to outlaw segregation by law—though not, by and large, in effect.

Spectacle Murders, Then and Now

Lynchings were horrific. Victims would be tarred and feathered, mutilated, set afire and burned to death. Hundreds of racists would gather as an audience and to take home parts of the body. Between 1882 and 1968, according to archives compiled by Tuskegee University, there were 4,743 lynchings in the U.S.—a number that does not include all the people who went "missing." About three-fourths of the victims were Black—most of them male, most in the South. These public spectacles served to foment even more intense racism and to reinforce the divide between Black and white workers, despite the fact that Southern white workers were paid far less than the national standard. Racism kept all poor people down.

The urban rebellions of the 1960s triggered a new wave of spectacle murders; cops killed Black Panthers in their beds. Today the Ku Klux Klan has been supplanted by cops, the Klan in blue. Over the first five months of 2015, according to the Washington Post (5/30/15), at least 385 people were shot and killed by police nationwide—more than twice the rate of fatal police shootings previously acknowledged by the federal government. Among the newspaper's findings:

- About half the victims were white, the other half Black or Latin. But among victims who were unarmed, two-thirds were Black or Latin.
- Overall, Black people were killed by cops at three times the rate of white people, even after adjusting for the population of the census tracts where the shootings occurred.
- Overall, 16 percent of the victims were either carrying a toy or were unarmed. Twenty percent of the unarmed victims were killed while trying to run away.
- Eight of the dead were children younger than 18.
- As of the article's publication date, only three of the 385 fatal shootings—less than 1 percent—had resulted in a cop being charged with a crime.

But despite the power of the state to commit and whitewash state-sanctioned racist murder, generations of workers—men and women, Black and white—have never stopped fighting back. In the late 1920s, the Communist Party USA challenged Jim Crow and led an anti-lynching campaign in the Deep South. Progressive Labor Party has consistently organized against police terror, dating back to the 1979 summer project in Tupelo, Mississippi. From Harlem and Watts to Ferguson and Baltimore, workers have drawn the line and counter-attacked police in violent urban rebellions. More than three years after Shantel Davis was shot and killed by cops as she tried to drive away, outraged workers still stage regular demonstrations in her memory—and to remind the ruling class that we do not forget.

Under the profit system, Black lives don't matter because the capitalists need to intimidate and divide us to maintain their control. All that matters to the bosses are their super-profits. They've shown their willingness to kill millions—from the streets of the U.S. to the Middle East—to keep what they have and grab for more.

All workers' lives will be valued only when a communist revolution by the international working class, led by the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party, smashes capitalism and the racist terror it relies upon. Forward!✪

Communist Forces Needed to Smash the Bosses, Again!

On June 22, 1941, Hitler's army invaded the Soviet Union. For several months, the Red Army retreated. In October, and again in December, the Red Army counterattacked, driving the fascists back. This was the first time the Nazi-led forces had been stopped. In 1940 French and British troops had been quickly routed by the German Wehrmacht.

The USSR was invaded not by Germany alone. Most of continental Europe, already occupied by Germany, poured its industry, raw materials, and human resources into the invasion. Units from almost every European country fought on the side of the Nazi army. It's more accurate, therefore, to refer to Hitler's military as the "Fascist" forces. Finland, Romania, Hungary, and Italy also declared war on the USSR and sent large-scale armies to the invasion. These same armies collaborated in the mass murder of 15 million Soviet civilians, including two-thirds of the 6 million Jews killed by the fascists.

The Red Army faced 80 percent of all the Fascist forces, far more than did the Western Allies. More Soviet soldiers were killed in the taking of Berlin than U.S. soldiers killed during the entire war.

Early on in World war II, there is compelling evidence that the Western Allies had tried hard to help Hitler conquer the Soviet Union. There is a huge amount of evidence of this. For example:

- The "Munich" sellout of October 1938, where the Britain and France gave democratic Czechoslovakia to Hitler without even informing the Czech government (first the Sudetenland, then in March 1939 the rest of the country). The Bank of England even transferred the Czech gold reserves to Hitler!
- The refusal of the Polish government to endorse "collective security" against Hitler. Josef Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, refused to sign any agreement that would permit the Red Army to enter Polish territory in order to engage the German army. This one act guaranteed World War II and the destruction of Poland.

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The False Promise of ISIS

Why are millions in the Middle East, Europe and North America attracted to the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL or Daesh)? Part of the answer lies in the defeat of the old communist movement, which left a vacuum to be filled by rotten capitalist ideologies. One such ideology is radical Islam. Alienated young people have no alternative vision, no objective explanation for the horrors of capitalism, no organization to lead the fight for a better life.

Failure of the Old Movement

Through much of the 20th century, throughout the Middle East, there were large, pro-Soviet parties. In the early 1950s, Iran had the world's largest non-ruling phony "communist" party. In the 1960s, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser inspired—and misled—millions with his denunciations of imperialism and capitalist greed. He also attacked what he called "feudal reactionary" Islam, while praising his fellow nationalist capitalists and "anti-imperialist" Muslim clerics. Throughout the 1970s, governments in Syria, Iraq, Algeria, and Libya, among others, all claimed to be socialist and anti-imperialist. They denounced Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, for tilting in favor of U.S. imperialism. In the 1980s, workers across the Middle East were attracted to movements that claimed to be more leftist than the ruling "socialists." In Iran, Turkey and Palestine, these movements had millions of followers.

With the reversion of the Soviet Union and China to capitalism, even the pretense of progressive politics in the Middle East disintegrated. Ruling classes across the region peddled the lie that "communism failed." In fact, what had failed was socialism and nationalism. What had failed were leaders who claimed they could reform their way to a better world—without violent revolution and real communist ideas. That is why PLP fights as one international working class to smash all borders with an armed revolution that leads directly to communism.

Today, in the absence of a mass communist movement, capitalist rulers see less need to channel angry workers into reform movements. Instead, they rely primarily on repression. From the U.S. to Saudi Arabia and Israel, the capitalists' "war on terror" labels any who resist ruling-class oppression as terrorists.

The misleaders in the Middle East are oil-thirsty capitalists dressed as religious fundamentalists. Each group is worse than the last, from the Salafist Saudi rulers to Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda to ISIS. Each year these reactionary forces grow more extreme and sexist. The Saudi Salafis prohibit women from driving. The Taliban bans secular education and forces women to cover themselves head to toe. ISIS kidnaps women for forced marriage as it sings the praises of slavery and the beheading non-believers.

Racist ISIS Illusions Broken

ISIS has drawn heavily from Saddam Hussein's old army, and it knows how to organize. It offers:

1. An analysis of Western imperialism that can be superficially appealing but at best incomplete.
2. A vision of "true Islam" and restoration of an Islamic "caliphate." In reality, ISIS has no more to do with early Islam than the Pope and his band of Vatican thieves relate to early Christianity. It is a standard, top-down, capitalist dictatorship, run for the benefit of a small group at the top.
3. An organization that welcomes and incorporates recruits into a tight structure, even those who may not be particularly religious at first. With the aid of social media, ISIS is adept at spreading its ideology in the face of intense repression. (By contrast, Al-Qaeda offers no comparable vision, and its paranoia prevents it from welcoming most potential recruits.) But despite Its emphasis on "the Muslim community" and its disdain for national borders, ISIS is both nationalist and racist. Ninety percent of its top posts are held by Iraqis, while African recruits are paid less and assigned worse jobs than Europeans.

The more ISIS advances, the more brutal it has become. Its rule relies on terror, nationalism, and oppression of women rather than winning mass support.

For the millions of unemployed, alienated youth searching for an answer, the solution is communism. The job of Progressive Labor Party is to redouble our efforts to ensure that the next generations of angry workers turn not to religious fanaticism or any other capitalist ideology, but instead to revolutionary communism. This means fighting racism and sexism head-on! We are building a movement where women are militant mass leaders, not targets of sexist violence. It is our responsibility to win more people to our analysis, our communist vision, and an organization that empowers workers rather than enslaving them.✪

Communist Forces Needed to Smash the Bosses, Again!

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A few years ago, evidence was discovered in the Russian Archives that suggested that Beck was a German agent. In any case, he certainly acted like one.

- The refusal by the British government in August 1939 to sign a mutual defense treaty with the USSR against Nazi Germany, thus guaranteeing Hitler's victory against Poland in September 1939.
- The refusal of Britain and France to defend Poland when Hitler invaded it on September 1, 1939, despite their mutual defense treaty with Poland.
- The "phony war" of September 1939 to May 1940, when France and the UK, though formally at war with Hitler, refused to engage his forces.
- The attempt by the UK and France to send an army to fight against the USSR on the side of pro-Germany Finland during the Russo-Finnish War of December 1939 to March 1940.



The Red Army plants the communist flag over Berlin's Reichstag building in 1945.
Communists defeated fascists once and we are building a movement to defeat them once again.

The Soviet victory heralded the advance of communism throughout the world. This terrified the capitalists, who began inventing lie after lie about the Soviet role in the war, the Red Army, and the communist forces generally. These lies continue to be spread today, as is evident in *Bloodlands*, the recent book by Yale professor Timothy Snyder. It is yet another attempt to equate Stalin and Hitler, communism and fascism.

It's important to expose these lies, though that never stops the anti-communists from spreading them and inventing others. Meanwhile, World War II is portrayed as "the Good War" in Western capitalist countries. A good book that unmasks this myth is Jacques Pauwels' *The Myth of the Good War*.

New Communist Force Needed Today

Today, fascism is once again on the advance. Without the example and the threat of a socialist bloc, the world's capitalists see no reason not to drive the living standards of workers as low as they can possibly go. All over the world, capitalist forces are assaulting the wages, benefits, and living standards of working people. In Europe, the "welfare state" is under sharp attack. In the US, what little social welfare we enjoyed is being swiftly eroded.

To support this new fascism the old forces of extreme nationalism and patriotism, sexism, racism, anti-immigrant racism, anti-Semitism, prejudice, religious ideologies, and anti-communism are being pushed with renewed intensity. The capitalists aim to divert workers' attention from their oppression under the profit system. Meanwhile, the capitalists get richer and richer. As in the past, the logic of capitalist exploitation is international competition and war—eventually another world war. Capitalism leads to war for imperial conquest and to divide up the world's riches.

This is a dismal future! The question is, what can we do about it? The answer is simple. We need another worldwide movement for communism! One that has learned from the errors of the communist movements of the 20th century while building on their successes. There is no other way forward for the international working class. Let's get to it!✪

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

A Mass Party Will Come from the Mass Movement

We participate in the mass organizations in order to fight for the political leadership of the working class and build a mass PLP. Reading and distributing CHALLENGE is central to our work. As we participate in fightbacks and reform campaigns in mass organizations, CHALLENGE gives us the opportunity to introduce communist politics and analysis to friends in our base at work, in schools, communities, and churches.

Our club is active in an immigrant rights group that is funded by the "liberal" ruling class and involved in various struggles, like a $15-an-hour minimum wage, housing issues and budget cuts. Within this, our club fights racism and for multiracial international unity of the working class. Over the past 10 years, we have grown to a club of 12 recruiting our five newest members after the rebellion in Ferguson against racist police terror.

We read CHALLENGE articles in our club meetings and study groups. We struggle with veteran and new members to distribute CHALLENGE hand to hand and through networks of readers and distributors as the main way to take advantage of the political opportunities to build the Party.

Each member takes between four and up to 50 papers each issue, allowing the club to distribute 150 CHALLENGEs hand to hand and through networks of non-Party workers, who also distribute some papers. We also sell or distribute papers at mass protests. In all, we usually distribute 200 to 250 copies. There is still a lot of room for improvement.

This process often leads to profound political discussion and uncovers many questions or disagreements. We talk about the contradiction between being in reform struggles while exposing capitalism and fighting for communist revolution. Many times workers ask why communism has failed. One new member recently explained how he confronts his friends' anti-communist ideas. We also expose the dead end of nationalist politics. As we build stronger ties with our friends, our members and our Party become stronger.

Two new friends came to our last study group. We identify new friends in the mass organization by how workers respond to CHALLENGE and to what our comrades say in meetings and at protests. We continue to struggle with our comrades to take advantage of the opportunities that always arise as the work in the mass organization continues.

★ ★ ★ ★

Movie Review: The Black Panthers

I went to see the new documentary *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution* by veteran Black documentary film maker Stanley Nelson, who also made the film *Freedom Summer* about the 1964 summer civil rights struggle in Mississippi. His new film is a fascinating look at the rise and fall of the Black Panther Party, celebrating the organization's accomplishments while discussing some of the flaws that contributed to its demise.

The film will have a commercial release in numerous cities beginning in September, and then will be shown on PBS in February. It's definitely worth watching.

It contains footage of BPP rallies and interviews with leaders and members, including Fred Hampton, the leader of the Illinois chapter who declared, "We say you don't fight racism with racism. We're gonna fight racism with solidarity. We say you don't fight capitalism with no black capitalism; you fight capitalism with socialism."

The film shows that while the top leaders of the BPP were men (including Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, and Bobby Seale), the majority of members were women. The public face of the BPP was mostly men, often in militant face-offs with the police, while it was women who quietly staffed the offices and ran the community breakfast and health clinic programs. Despite the importance of women, and despite capable women leaders like Elaine Brown, Ericka Huggins and Kathleen Cleaver, sexism was widespread in the BPP.

Nelson also reveals that a majority of the BPP members were teenagers, radicalized by the violent repression suffered by Black people. The BPP rejected non-violence and advocated armed self-defense of Black communities from racist police brutality. This was welcomed by millions at a time when people were fighting back all over the world, from Vietnam to Latin America.

The BPP advocated revolution — destroying capitalism — while at the same time demanding improvements in the lives of Black workers, including jobs, better housing, schools and health care, exemption from the imperialist military draft, and the end to police harassment and brutality. This was encapsulated in the BPP's 1966 Ten Point Program. Many thought the BPP had a bright future.

Yet it was not to be. Formed in 1966, the Panthers were essentially defunct by 1971, when they suffered a major split between factions based around Cleaver in Algeria (who advocated adventurist attacks on police that ended up getting members killed) and around Newton and David Hilliard (who favored focusing on the breakfast program and health clinics). There was also a move toward reformist electoral politics, with Bobby Seale running unsuccessfully for Mayor of Oakland in 1972. BPP chapters all around the country were closed down so that people could come to Oakland to help with the campaign.

One of the weaknesses of the BPP was that it seriously underestimated the power of the repressive state apparatus to attack and tear apart the organization. Under J. Edgar Hoover and Cointelpro, the FBI coordinated with local police forces to infiltrate the BPP with dozens of informants, to disrupt the BPP (by encouraging splits and personal attacks) and to murder members with armed attacks on its offices. One such brutal police assault killed Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in Chicago.

Another flaw was the cult worship of leaders like Huey Newton, who was addicted to cocaine, living in a penthouse apartment and often abusive to members. Eldridge Cleaver was a blatant sexist, who advocated risky small-group violence while living safely abroad. He would go on to become a "born-again" Christian and support Ronald Reagan, while being financially supported by right-wing groups.

A major weakness of the BPP was its unwillingness to focus on the Black working class and organize in factories, where a tremendous amount of anti-racist struggle was going on at the time, especially in the auto plants. Huey Newton and other leaders argued that the truly revolutionary class was not workers but rather the "lumpenproletariat," largely composed of people who made their living from criminal activity, including drugs and prostitution. If the BPP had focused its energies on building a base in the working class, as well as joining mass organizations like unions and churches, it might have endured state repression and not fallen apart.

The Black Panthers is an important film to watch and discuss with our friends, to learn the lessons — both positive and negative — of an organization that attracted thousands of young men and women who dedicated years of their lives to fighting against a destructive racist system and for a better society.

★ ★ ★ ★

What You Do Counts

In letter "Struggle and Learn" in CHALLENGE (6/17), I liked the lines, "We should constantly raise the line and struggle with people. It may seem like we're not getting anywhere, but we can never tell." It reminded me of a passage in a book I'm reading, which I would like to share.

The book is Heinz Rein's 1948 novel *Finale Berlin* which tells the story of an underground, communist-led German Resistance group during the last two weeks of World War II. After 12 years of clandestine struggle, the group succeeds in liberating a Berlin neighborhood as the Red Army approaches. One character says:

> *Up to now, we've performed our illegal work without any visible success, we've always only been able slightly to touch the people to whom we turned with our secret radio transmitter, our words have always dribbled into the darkness, have been vaporized into a great desert, our leaflets have continually fluttered into nothingness, we've never been able to observe their effect because we had to get away from the people who received them before they had unfolded them, our acts of sabotage often seemed ridiculously small to us, as if a mosquito was attacking an elephant, we've always remained without an echo, and in the final analysis it was only thanks to a belief in ourselves that we didn't despair at the wall of silence which all of us ran up against. But finally, yesterday evening, something really happened, there was a visible success, a many-voiced echo boomed back to us, there our activity, with which perhaps we only vindicated ourselves to ourselves, was transformed into a real deed for the first time.*

This dramatic example of events 70 years ago can inspire us never to despair. *Finale Berlin* was republished in Germany this year. As far as I know, it's never been translated into English or Spanish, but I recommend it to everyone who can read German. (Be forewarned that, as the excerpt shows, they liked to write very long sentences in the 1940s.)

★ ★ ★ ★

PL History: Fighting Racism the Key to Revolution

Continued from page 8

with contempt citations, and several were convicted and served prison time. An international defense campaign was launched; leftist philosophers Bertrand Russell and Jean-Paul Sartre, among others, spoke out on our members' behalf.

Although the rebellion soon subsided, our Party's reputation stayed strong in Black communities throughout the U.S. In San Francisco, where we had been virtually unknown, nearly 500 militant Black workers and youth turned out to hear a PLM leader give an eyewitness report of the Harlem struggle. Following Harlem, more than 100 cities nationwide, not content with "cooling it," felt the torch of rebellion.

Our role in the Harlem Rebellion is a testament to PL's lifelong committment to fighting racism. Thi is part and parcel of defeating capitalism. We envision a world where the very concept of race will be abolished. We will build a communist society where all workers have the same opportunity to use all their potential to advance humanity and the planet. Join us in building the next generation of international leaders against racism.✪


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LA SECCION ESPAÑOL — P. 8

THE REVOLUTIONARY WEEKLY

Vol. 1 No. 1 THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 1964

POLICE WAR ON HARLEM

See P. 3

Tortured...

The first issue of CHALLENGE. For 51 years, CHALLENGE has been bringing stories of anti-racist, communist struggle to the masses.

U.S. Training Nazis in Ukraine

Openly racist Nazi forces are now integrated into Ukraine's military and are receiving training from the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The U.S.-funded Ukrainian government in Kiev has merged the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion and several other battalions into the Ministry of Defense. Further, the foremost neo-Nazi leader in Ukraine, Dmitry Yarosh, has been made a Special Advisor to the Chief of Staff of the Ukrainian Army. And according to the Minister of the Interior, the U.S. Army is now training Azov.

Yarosh is the leader of Right Sector, a political movement initiated by the CIA-backed Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) that closely collaborated with Hitler. Through several armed formations (notably the UPA, or "Ukrainian People's Army"), the OUN killed over a million Jews, Poles, Russians and others during World War II. Right Sector and its military arm, Azov battalion, openly embrace the wartime OUN leaders, Stepan Bandera and Yaroslav Stetsko, as well as the UPA. On April 20, components of the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade began training the Azov Battalion, according to Arsen Avakov, Minister of Internal Affairs. U.S. agencies have said they are training three "National Guard" units without identifying them. With the merger of Azov with Aidar and Sich units, which also have Nazi ties, they are now called National Guard.

As further evidence of the Nazification of the Ukrainian regime in Kiev, a law was passed banning all symbols, expressions of sympathy or political actions labeled communist. The law creates new memorials for fascists like Bandera, Stetsko, as well as for the UPA—for those perpetrating mass extermination in World War II! While the law ostensibly bans symbols of German Nazism, it glorifies Ukrainian Nazism. Ironically, the Azov Battalion uses three German Nazi symbols in its literature, on its flags and on its military unit patches, without fear of penalty. This law to criminalize historical truth and political belief, speech and behavior was inspired by pressure brought last October by Right Sector/Azov and others, such as the Svoboda party. The Obama administration calls the shots in the Ukraine, primarily through Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland to Ukraine's Prime Minister Arseniy Yatseniuk, who has been on the U.S. payroll for many years. U.S. policy aims to strengthen the Nazi forces in western Ukraine to use them to beat down the rebels in the east.

By giving these fascists state power, however, the U.S. is making other allies nervous. General Waldemar Skrzypczak, a Polish retired general and now a deputy defense minister, has long been an anti-Russian hardliner. But after the law was passed glorifying "bloodthirsty nationalism" he withdrew his support for Ukraine and suggests that Poland will now have trouble supporting Kiev. His family was a victim of the UPA; its massacres in 1943 are well-known in Poland. Recently the U.S. Congress demanded more lethal military aid to Ukraine.

The merger of the Nazis into the Ministry of Defense increases resources for the Nazis by burying it in general military aid, so that donor nations are not criticized for helping groups like Azov.

The Azov Battalion, like neo-Nazis everywhere, makes a big deal about the symbolism encoded in dates and numbers—like "88," which refers not only to the millimeter gun size of Hitler's biggest tanks, but also to the eighth letter of the alphabet, HH, for Heil Hitler.

Another highly symbolic date is April 20, Hitler's birthday. On this day, the neo-Nazis get the gift of a lifetime: six months of expert U.S. military training. Money for Nazis, but none to stop water shutoffs, school shutdowns and home foreclosures.



The working class in Ukraine has no stake in any of the bosses' camps. As tensions heat up, the choices for workers are clear: racist Nazis or communist revolution?✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Black people oppressed by U.S. capitalist state power

NYT, 6/21 — The…Dylan Roof…massacre…in Charleston [South Carolina]….was a product of the same legacy of racism that sent Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, Eric Garner, Walter Scott and Tamir Rice to their graves….

Bryan Stevenson…who has…chronicled the legal system's unfairness to African-Americans, sees deep connections between…Roof's actions and the police killings of black males….

"This latest violent act is…not disconnected from the way black men are treated by police, by schools, by the state," Mr. Stevenson said….

…One in three black men are expected to spend time in prison at some point in their lives. The Great Recession wiped out twice as much black wealth as it did white….Post-recession median household wealth for a white family in 2014 was…$142,000….For black households [it] had fallen to $11,000….There are 1.5 million black men "missing" in America because they are either dead or in prison….

Black people were overwhelmingly excluded from the largest opportunities for wealth creation in the 20th century, from federally subsidized homeownership after World War II to the job training programs that created millions of…livelihoods….

Black Americans today…[face] struggles reminiscent of the last century. Highly militarized police forces patrol their communities….Mass incarceration and harsh policing tactics have replaced Jim Crow laws as a way to control the black population.

Life expectancy rates for black Americans lag those of white[s]…and infant mortality rates are higher. Black America… "is…embedded in the greatest super-power the world has ever known."

Imperialism's wars, economic crises drive 60 million+ from their homes

NYT, 6/23 — Nearly 60 million people have been driven from their homes by wars and persecution, an unprecedented global exodus…with waves of newcomers and littered deserts and seas with the bodies of those who died trying to reach safety….by the end of 2014….

Half of the displaced are children….

Tens of millions of others fled in previous years and remain stuck, sometimes for decades, unable to go home or find permanent new one….

…By the end of 2014, 7.6 million Syrians were displaced within the country itself, and nearly another 3.9 million were refugees….

Those who live in refugee camps are extremely vulnerable to hunger, unemployment and sexual violence.

Blood for oil: killing 74 and counting

Politico Magazine, 6/15 — The Bakken [N. Dakota] oil boom has been a serial killer. Big oil companies have largely written the rules governing their own accountability for accidents,…putting workers at risk….

[On]…September 14, 2011,…Brenden Wegner, 21, was scrambling down a derrick ladder when the oil well he was working on exploded,…his body pinned under a heap of melted pipes….

Wegner's co-workers Ray Hardy…died the next day of his burns [and Michael] Twinn would have his lower legs amputated, and, dogged by post-traumatic stress disorder,…killed himself….

On average, someone dies about every six weeks from an accident in the Bakken — at least 74 since 2006….The number of deaths is likely even higher because federal regulators don't have a systematic way to record oil- and gas-related deaths…and [don't] include certain fatalities, such as those of independent contractors.

…Deeply entrenched corporate practices…inoculate energy producers against responsibility when workers are killed or injured….Oil companies also offer financial incentives to workers for speeding up production — potentially jeopardizing their safety — and avoid paying the full cost of settlements…by shielding themselves behind a web of companies….

North Dakota now ranks just behind Texas with the second-largest oil reserve in the U.S….

The top energy producers…are permitted to offload responsibility to smaller contractors; then there is little incentive to make worksites safer….

"The Bakken is the most dangerous oil field in the U.S." [Wegner's family lawyer] said. "The energy producers never pay for their mistakes; the insurance company for the contractor pays. It doesn't give them any incentive to change the procedures that are unsafe."

U.S. policy created slums for Black workers

National Public Radio interview, 5/16 — …Recent unrest in Baltimore is the legacy of a century of federal, state and local policies designed to "quarantine Baltimore's black population in isolated slums…."

Fifty years after the repeal of Jim Crow,…African-Americans still live in segregated ghettos in the country's metropolitan areas….

…"It was an explicit, racially purposeful policy that was pursued at all levels of government….

…[President Roosevelt's] New Deal's Public Works Administration led to the creation of segregated ghettos….Public housing…in the early years was built in integrated neighborhoods, which they razed and then built segregated public housing in those neighborhoods. So public housing created racial segregation where none existed before….

…The Federal Housing Administration's overtly racist policies in the 1930s, '40s and '50s…financed mass production builders of subdivisions…[and] gave builders…concessionary loans through banks because they guaranteed loans at lower interest rates…that the developers could use…on the condition that no homes…could be sold to African-Americans….

…Government policy — municipal policy… — denied adequate services, garbage wasn't collected frequently. African-Americans were crowded into neighborhood in the ghetto because so much other housing was closed to them and as a result, housing prices…were much higher than similar housing in white areas…because you had a smaller supply….So this created slum conditions.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

PL History: Fighting Racism the Key to Revolution

To mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Progressive Labor Party, CHALLENGE is publishing a series of articles on our Party's history, from its origins as the Progressive Labor Movement (PLM) to its presence today in more than two dozen countries worldwide. This issue reviews one of PLP/PLM's historic fights against racism.

In the class war to overthrow capitalism, fighting racism is a strategic necessity. When the bosses divide Black and white workers, the entire working class is denied the potential of Black workers' leadership in the fight for armed communist revolution. In the United States, drawing from their historical super-oppression, Black workers led the battle against slavery. They have stood on the front lines in major strikes, in the fight for jobs and in other attacks on the profit system.

Ever since the 17th century, when Black slaves were first brought to the Americas from Africa, racism has been the keystone of the U.S. capitalist system. Racism pits groups of workers against one another, diluting our class's strength in battles against the rulers. Racism enables the bosses to use lower-paid Black and Latin workers as a wedge against white workers struggling to improve wages and working conditions. As a result, the capitalist ruling class takes greater profits from all workers while stealing super-profits—totaling hundreds of billions of dollars a year—from Black and Latin workers.

By claiming that some workers are superior to others, racism devalues human life. To continue to build our Party, and ultimately to lead a communist revolution against the capitalist class, we must put the fight against racism and for multiracial, working-class unity front and center.

Harlem Rebellion

In 1964, the young Progressive Labor Movement played a lead role in the historic Harlem Rebellion, the first Black-led urban uprising of the era against police terror. On July 16, an off-duty cop, Lieutenant Thomas Gilligan, shot and murdered James Powell, a 15-year-old, 122-pound ninth-grader, in cold blood. For six consecutive nights, the anger of the Black masses boiled over in open rebellion in central Harlem and then in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. Thousands of militant youth took to the streets, directing their anger at the cops and at price-gouging store owners. Molotov cocktails were hurled at shops and police cars. Thousands of cops were rushed to Harlem to quell the revolt, but it continued to spread. Thousands of gunshots were exchanged.

Mayor Robert Wagner and his police commissioner put Harlem under virtual martial law, outlawing demonstrations, rallies and marches. Civil rights misleaders tried to control the crowd by calling for "peaceful protest," but were ignored. The phony "leftist" Communist Party USA (CPUSA) backed these reformist pleas for peace at any price. PLM was the only force to give political direction to the spontaneous rebellion.

Thousands of PLM posters declaring, "WANTED FOR MURDER, GILLIGAN THE COP!" were circulated throughout Harlem and beyond. Thousands of copies of CHALLENGE—first published a few weeks earlier—were distributed. Rebels marched in the streets with the paper's front page as their flag.

PLM pointed out that the rebellion was also directed against Harlem's pervasive racist conditions: an unemployment rate three times as high as the city as a whole; half the city's average family income; three times the ratio of substandard housing; nearly twice the infant mortality rate. Black women workers were and are the most exploited section of the working class. This fight against racism was yoked to the fight against sexism. Though anti-sexist class-consciousness was not at the forefront, the Rebellion was also a fight against these sexist living and working conditions in Harlem.

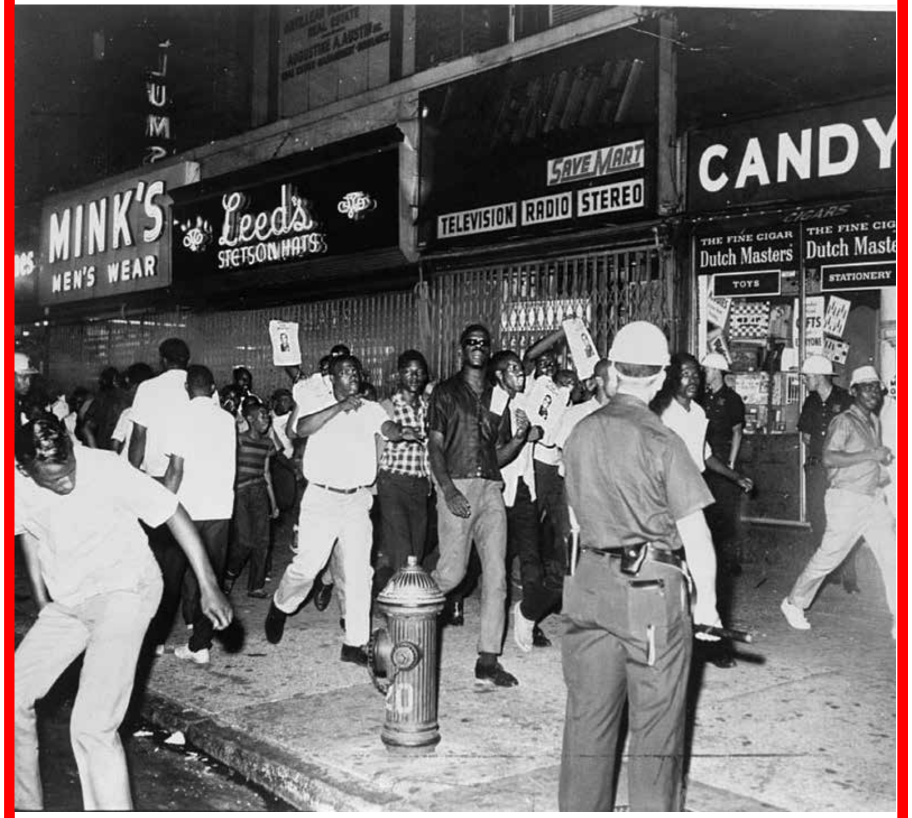
Bosses Attack PL

The bosses' media viciously attacked PL for "inciting riots." The CPUSA called us "adventurist." Our leaders' lives were threatened, and they were tailed by the cops' Red Squad 24 hours a day. Several were arrested for defying the rulers' bans on demonstrations and for "inciting to riot," which carried a potential sentence of 20 years in jail.

Specifically, PLM was enjoined from organizing marches between 110th Street and 155th Street for the whole width of Manhattan. We defied the ban and led a demonstration in the heart of Harlem. The Harlem PLM chapter leader was convicted and jailed for "inciting a riot," as were the printers who made the Gilligan poster. Dozens of PL'ers and friends were subpoenaed before a grand jury and threatened

Continued on page 6





Rebels hold up wanted posters at a rally and march. PLP published thousands of these posters which were pasted up throughout the city, becoming a declaration of the Rebellion and led to the rulers' jailing of PL's printers.